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information about teacher shortage. You have a fact sheet with some of the issues that we're facing out there. Two years ago I introduced bills to deal with the teacher shortage issue because of the interest of the metro area in it. We expanded our group to include people from around the state and they were introduced last year. Then this year the bills that were introduced that are included in this bill developed from a group that was meeting with a statewide task force formed by the Department of Education called the Recruitment, Retention, and Renewal Task Force. I know in the Governor's statement he feels this should be part of a salary study. I feel these are more retention and recruitment efforts. Nineteen other states provide a teacher loan forgiveness program as a way to recruit teachers and also have them targeted to shortage areas, both geographic and subject areas. And that's what the Education Committee did as we move forward with this bill. It is targeted for those areas. Our neighboring state of South Dakota started this calendar year 1,000 teachers short. We have on the e-mails that you see attached to this comments from administrators around the state what the difficulties they are having filling positions in our state in areas such as industrial technology, foreign languages, special education, music, and math and science. And I hope that over the interim you will talk to your school administrators, both public and private schools. The parochial schools are facing severe challenges in this area also, and we need to look at the education of all of our children. When you talk to them, ask them about the quality of the pools that they are interviewing this year. Ask them about the numbers. Ask them about the subject areas they're dealing with and whether they're having problems because they're in a part of the state that may be more sparsely populated and having difficulty encouraging people to come to the teaching profession. In the 1960s and seventies when I was an education student, 20 percent of college freshmen planned to go into education. Today, it's less than 8 percent. We need to do things to encourage our own youth in Nebraska who have an interest in this area to encourage them to go into teaching. We know that at our own University of Nebraska Lincoln we have in ten years a 30 percent decline in number of degrees awarded to education students. I asked that a survey be done at a convention this fall with school administrators, and we asked the question, do you have fewer applicants than you did five years ago? And 65 of 66 school